

## Last Days of Frank James

(New York Sun.)

In Julian Street's clever book of American travel, "Abroad at Home," recently published by the Century Company, he devotes a chapter to describing a visit to Frank James and the James homestead in Missouri, where the famous bandit recently died a peaceful death.

The James farm, says Mr. Street, occupies a pretty bit of rolling land, at one corner of which, near the road, Frank James has built himself a neat, substantial frame house.

Before the house is a large gate, bearing a sign as follows:

**James Farms  
Home of The James'  
Jesse and Frank  
Admission 50c.  
Kodaks Bared.**

That word "bared" is not bad proof-reading; it was spelled like that on the sign.

As we moved in the direction of the house a tall, slender old man with a large hooked nose and a white beard and mustaches walked toward us. He was dressed in an exceedingly neat suit and wore a large black felt hat of the type common throughout Missouri. Coming up, he greeted our escort cordially, after which we were introduced. It was Frank James.

The former outlaw is a shrewd looking, well preserved man, whose carriage, despite his seventy-one years, is notably erect. He looks more like a prosperous farmer or the president of a rural bank than like a bandit. In his manner there is a strong note of the showman. It is not at all objectionable, but it is there, in the same way that it is there in Buffalo Bill. Frank James is an interesting figure; on meeting him you see at once that he knows that he is an interesting figure and that he trades upon the fact. He is clearly an intelligent man, but he has been looked at and listened to for so many years, as a kind of curiosity that he has the air of going through his tricks for one—of getting off a line of practised patter. It is pretty good patter as patter goes, inclining to quotation, epigram and homely philosophy, delivered in an assured "platform manner."

It may be well here to remind the reader of the history of the James gang.

The father and mother of the "boys" came from Kentucky to Missouri. The father was a Baptist minister and a slaveholder. He died before the war, and his widow married a man named Samuels, by whom she had several children.

### Barbarity on the Border.

From the year 1856 Missouri, which was a slave State, warred with Kansas, which was a free State, and there was much barbarity along the border. The "Jayhawkers," or Kansas guerrillas, would make forays into Missouri, stealing cattle, burning houses and committing all manner of depredations; and lawless gangs of Missourians would retaliate in kind on Kansas. Among the most appalling outthroats on the Missouri side was a man named Quantrell, head of the Quantrell gang, a body of guerrillas which sometimes numbered upward of a thousand men. The James boys were members of this gang, Frank James joining it at the opening of the civil war and Jesse two years later, at the age of 16. In speaking of joining Quantrell, Frank James spoke of "going into the army." Quantrell was, however, a mere border ruffian and was disowned by the Confederate army.

According to Frank James, Quantrell, who was born in Canal Dover, Ohio, went west, with his brother, to settle. In Kansas they were set upon by "Jayhawkers" and "Redlegs," with the result that Quantrell's brother was killed and that Quantrell himself was wounded and left for dead. He was, however, nursed to life by a Nez Perce Indian. When he recovered he became determined to have revenge upon the Kansans. To that end he affected to be in sympathy with them, and joined some of their marauding bands. When he had established himself in their confidence he used to get himself sent out on scouting expeditions with one or two other men, and it was his amiable custom upon such occasions to kill his companions and return with a story of an attack by the enemy in which the others had met death. At last, when he had played this trick so often that he feared detection, he determined to get himself clear of his fellows. A plan had been matured for an attack upon the house of a rich slaveholder. Quantrell went to the house in advance, betrayed the plan and arranged to join forces with the defenders. This resulted in the death of his seven or eight companions. At about this time the war came on, and Quantrell became a famous guerrilla leader, falling on detached bodies of Northern troops and massacring of his worst offences having been the massacre of most of the male inhabitants of Lawrence, Kan. He gave as the reason for his atrocities his desire for revenge for the death of his brother, and also used to allege that he

was a Southerner, thought that was not true.

### Why He Joined Quantrell.

I asked Frank James how he came to join Quantrell when the war broke out, instead of enlisting in the regular army.

"We knew he was not a very fine character," he explained, "but we were like the followers of Villa or Huerta; he wanted to destroy the folks that wanted to destroy us, and we would follow any man that would show us how to do it. Besides, I was young then. When a man is young his blood is hot; there's a million things he'll do then that he won't do when he's older. There's a story about a man at a banquet. He was offered champagne to drink, but he said: 'I want quick action. I'll take Bourbon whiskey.' That was the way I felt. That's why I joined Quantrell; to get quick action. And I got it, too. Jesse and I were with Quantrell until he was killed in Kentucky."

John Samuels, a half brother of the James boys, told me the story of how Jesse James came to join Quantrell.

"Jesse was out ploughing in a field," he said, "when some Northern soldiers came to the place to look for Frank James. Jesse was only 16 years old. They beat him up. Then they went to the house and asked where Frank was. Mother and father didn't know, but the soldiers wouldn't believe them. They took father out and hung him by the neck to a tree. After a while they took him down and gave him another chance to tell. Of course he couldn't, so they hung him up again. They did that three times. Then they took him back to the house and told my mother they were going to shoot him. She begged them not to do it, but they took him off in the woods and fired their guns so she'd hear, and think they'd done it. But they didn't shoot him. They just took him over to another town and put him in jail. My mother didn't know until the next day that he hadn't been shot, because the soldiers ordered her to remain in the house if she didn't want to get shot too."

"That was too much for Jesse. He said: 'Maw, I can't stand it any longer; I'm going to join Quantrell.' And he did."

### After The War.

After the war the wilder element from the disbanded armies and guerrilla gangs caused continued trouble. Crime ran rampant along the border between Kansas and Missouri. And for many crimes committed in the neighborhood in which they lived the James boys, who were known to be wild, were blamed.

"Mother always said," declared Mr. Samuels, "that Frank and Jesse wanted to settle down after the war, but that the neighbors wouldn't let them. Everything that went wrong around this region was always charged to them, until, finally, they were driven to outlawry."

"How much truth is there in the different stories of bank robberies and train robberies committed by them?" I asked.

"I don't know," he said. "Of course they did a lot of things. But we never knew. They never said anything. They'd just come riding home, every now and then, and stop for a while and then go riding away again. We never knew where they came from or where they went."

It has been alleged that even after a reward of \$10,000 had been offered for either of the Jameses, dead or alive, the neighbors shielded them when it was known that they were at home. I spoke about that to an old man who lived on a nearby farm.

"Yes," he said, "that's true. Once when the Pinkertons were hunting them I met Frank and some members of the gang riding along the road, not far from here. I could have told, but I didn't want to. I wasn't looking for any trouble with the James gang. Suppose they had caught one or two of them? There'd be others left to get even with me, and I had my family to think of. That is the way lots of the neighbors felt about it. They were afraid to tell."

### Raps Cheap Novels.

I spoke to Frank James about the old "nickel novels."

"Yes," he said, "some fellows printed a lot of stuff. I'd have stopped it, maybe, if I'd had as much money as Rockefeller. But what could I do? I tell you those yellow back books have done a lot of harm to the youth of this land—those and the moving pictures showing robberies. Such things demoralize youth. If I had the job of censoring the moving pictures, they'd say I was a reg'lar Robespierre!"

"How about some of the old stories them and even attacking towns—one of robberies in which you were supposed to have taken part?" I asked.

"I neither affirm nor deny," Frank James answered with the glibness of long custom. "If I admitted that these stories were true people would say: 'There is the greatest scoundrel unhung!' and if I denied 'em, they'd say: 'There's the greatest liar on earth!' So I just say nothing."

According to John Samuels, Frank James and Cole Younger were generally acknowledged to be the brains

of the James gang. "It was claimed," he said, "that Frank planned and Jesse executed. Frank was certainly the cool man of the two, and Jesse was a little bit excitable. He had the name of being the quickest man in the world with a gun. Sometimes when he was home for a visit, when I was a boy, he'd be sitting there in the house, and there'd come some little noise. Then he'd whip out his pistol so quick you couldn't see the motion of his hand."

As we conversed we strolled in the direction of the old house, that house of tragedy in which the family lived in the troublous times. On the way we passed Frank James's chicken coop, and I noticed that on it had been painted the legend: "Bull Moose — T. R."

"The wing, at the back, is the old part of the house," James explained. "It was there that the Pinkertons threw the bomb."

### Bomb Throwing Incident.

I asked about the bomb throwing and heard the story from John Samuels, who was there when it occurred.

"I was a child of 13 then," he said, "and I was the only one in the room who wasn't killed or crippled. It happened at night. We had suspected for a long time that a man named Laird, who was working as a farm hand for a neighbor of ours named Askew on that farm over there,"—he indicated a farm house on a nearby hill—"was a Pinkerton man and that he was there to watch for Frank and Jesse. Well, one night he must have decided they were at home, for the house was surrounded while we were asleep. A lot of torches were put around in the yard to give light. Then the house was set on fire in seven places and a bomb was thrown in through the window." He pointed to a window in the side of the old log wing. "It was about midnight. My mother and little brother and I were in the room. My mother kicked the bomb into the fireplace before it went off. The fuse was sputtering. Maybe she even thought of throwing the thing out of the window again. Anyhow, when it exploded it blew off her forearm and killed my little brother."

"Come in the house," invited Frank James. "We've got a piece of the bomb in there."

We entered the old cabin. In the fireplace marks of the explosion are still visible. The piece of the bomb which they preserved is a bowl-shaped bit of iron about the size of a bread and butter plate.

"What was their idea in throwing the bomb?" I asked.

"As near as we know," replied Frank James, "the Pinkertons figured that Jesse and I were sleeping in the front part of the house. You see there's a little porch running back from the main house to the door of the old cabin. They must have figured that when the bomb went off we would run out on the porch to see what was the matter. Then they were going to bag us."

"Well, did you run out?"

"Evidently not," said Frank James. "Were you there?" I asked.

"Some think we were and some think not," he said.

An old man who had been constable of the township at the time the James boys were on the warpath had come up and joined us.

"How about Askew?" I suggested. "I should have thought he would have been afraid to harbor a Pinkerton man."

The old man nodded. "You'd of thought so, wouldn't you?" he agreed. "Askew was shot dead three months after the bomb throwing. He was carrying a pail of milk from the stable to the house when he got three bullets in the face."

"Who killed him?" I asked.

The old constable allowed his eyes to drift ruminatively over the neighboring hillsides before replying. Frank James and his half brother, who were standing by, also heard my question and they, too, became interested in the surrounding scenery. "Well, I," said the old constable at last, "that's always been a question."

### WINTER'S HEAVIEST SNOW.

**Storm of Flakes Whirls Across New York State.**

New York, March 6.—Winter's heaviest snow storm swirled across New York today, bringing death to one man and causing many minor accidents. When the storm had swept eastward tonight after playing havoc with steam, vehicle, and foot traffic, the weather bureau announced that five and one-fifth inches of snow had fallen, but it was melting rapidly.

Blinded by the snow, Anthony Mel-loria, twenty-five years old, walked in front of a train at Passaic, N. J., and was killed. Many persons suffered fractured limbs, cuts, and bruises in accidents on streets and sidewalks.

Tonight 15,000 men are cleansing the streets.

Light rains were forecast for tomorrow.

### Snow In North Texas.

Dallas, Texas, March 6.—Snow fell today throughout much of north Texas, with temperatures at about freezing, and endangering fruit trees, which in many sections are in bloom. Gainesville, Texas, reported the heaviest snow of the winter.

"Dreadnaught gray" is a new color for blouses and for men's neckwear in England.

## STEAMER STANDS BY BURNING LINER

Late Wireless Says Rotterdam Will Tow La Touraine Safely To Port

(By the Associated Press.)

London, March 7. (1:03 a. m.)—La Touraine)—A further message from the steamship, La Touraine, received at Queenstown, says that the steamer, Rotterdam, is standing by prepared to render every assistance, including the transfer of passengers if necessary. Wireless messages have been sent out to the steamers, Arago, Cornishman, Swanmore, and Starford, saying that their assistance is not now required.

Meantime, however, a S. O. S. has been picked up by a British cruiser on patrol duty in the Atlantic, and she had proceeded at top speed to the assistance of La Touraine. Her aid is not considered necessary, as the captain of the Rotterdam has promised to stand by La Touraine until safely navigated to port.

When the Rotterdam reached La Touraine, the crew of the latter vessel were fighting the fire with every means at their disposal.

### The Fire Was 'ierce.

London, March 6.—The steamship La Touraine is afloat at Latitude 18.46 North and longitude 20.14 west, according to a wireless received here. Five steamers have gone to her assistance, the message said.

The wireless was received by Lloyds from the station at Valentia, Ireland. The steamers Rotterdam, Swanmore, Cornishman, Arago and others were mentioned as having gone to aid La Touraine.

A message from Queenstown says that the fire on La Touraine is "ierce." Otherwise this message is a repetition of the one received by Lloyds from the wireless station at Valencia.

The London office of the Compagnie Generale Trans-Atlantique which owns La Touraine, is without special information concerning the vessel.

### Has Had Eventful Career.

La Touraine, a steamer of 3,275 tons, under Captain Caussin, is one of the older trans-Atlantic liners, having been built in 1891. She has played an interesting role in ocean travel. She arrived in New York on October 28, 1913, with forty-two persons which she rescued from the German liner Vultur which burned at sea with the loss of 132 lives. Captain Caussin was one of the first commanders of rescue steamers to get a boat over in the heavy sea to aid in the rescue work. The captain and crew were decorated with medals for their bravery on that occasion.

It was the captain of La Touraine who warned the ill-fated Titanic of the presence of icebergs in her course.

Once before La Touraine was threatened by fire. Flames were discovered in the state rooms while she lay at her dock in Havre, January 21, 1904. The damage was not serious.

She was withdrawn from service for a time in 1907 because of serious damage to her machinery. The discovery was made just before she was due to sail from New York. On another occasion a member of her crew was killed by the bursting of a steam pipe.

When the European war began, the entire carrying capacity of La Touraine was reserved for Americans struggling for passage home from France. She arrived in New York December 18, 1914, thirty-six hours overdue because of hurricanes she encountered. High seas swept her while the passengers were battered down below.

The steamer is 520 feet long with a beam of 56 feet and a depth of 34.5.

### NO CONTRACT JUMPER WANTED

**President Ward Tells His Manager Not to Sign James.**

(By the Associated Press.)

New York, March 6.—Robert H. Ward, president of the Brooklyn Federals, announced today he had telegraphed Lee Magee, manager of the team at Browns Wells, Miss., that he would not sanction the signing of William James, pitcher for the Boston Nationals, by the Brooklyn Federals. James has been reported as dissatisfied and contemplating a jump from the world's champions.

Mr. Ward asserted that he understood that James had an iron-bound contract with two years to run, and he would under no circumstances have a contract jumper on his team.

### TOWNSHIP DEATHS.

**Five Die in Raleigh Township, While Fifteen Were Born.**

During February five people died and 15 infants were born in Raleigh township as reported yesterday by Registrar W. T. Davis. Of the births 13 were white and two colored. All of those dying were white. The causes of the deaths were diabetes, accident by auto, epileptic convulsion, smothered, and one stillborn.